

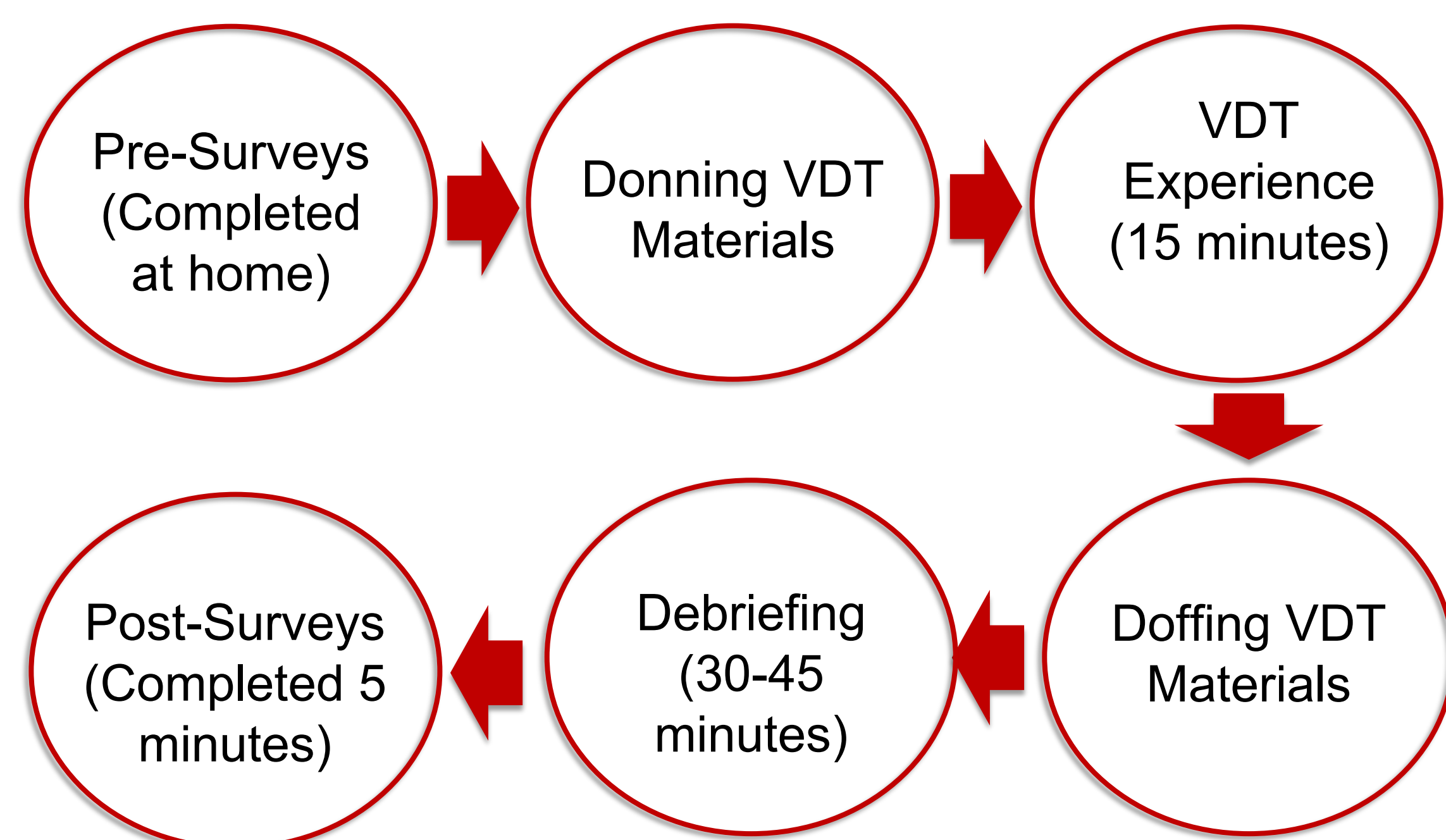
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## Introduction

- 6.7 million patients live with Alzheimer's Disease and related dementias (ADRD) in the USA<sup>1</sup>
- \$345 billion/year in healthcare costs for dementias patients<sup>1</sup>
- Dementia simulations improve compassion and empathy in providers and caregivers<sup>2,3</sup>
- Agency for Healthcare and Research Quality recommends including pharmacists in ADRD care teams<sup>4</sup>
- Limited knowledge of pharmacist training in ADRD
- No studies evaluating change in ADRD empathy in USA pharmacy students

## Methods

- UGA College of Pharmacy partnered with Second Wind Dreams to provide a Virtual Dementia Tour (VDT) to 140 second-year pharmacy students

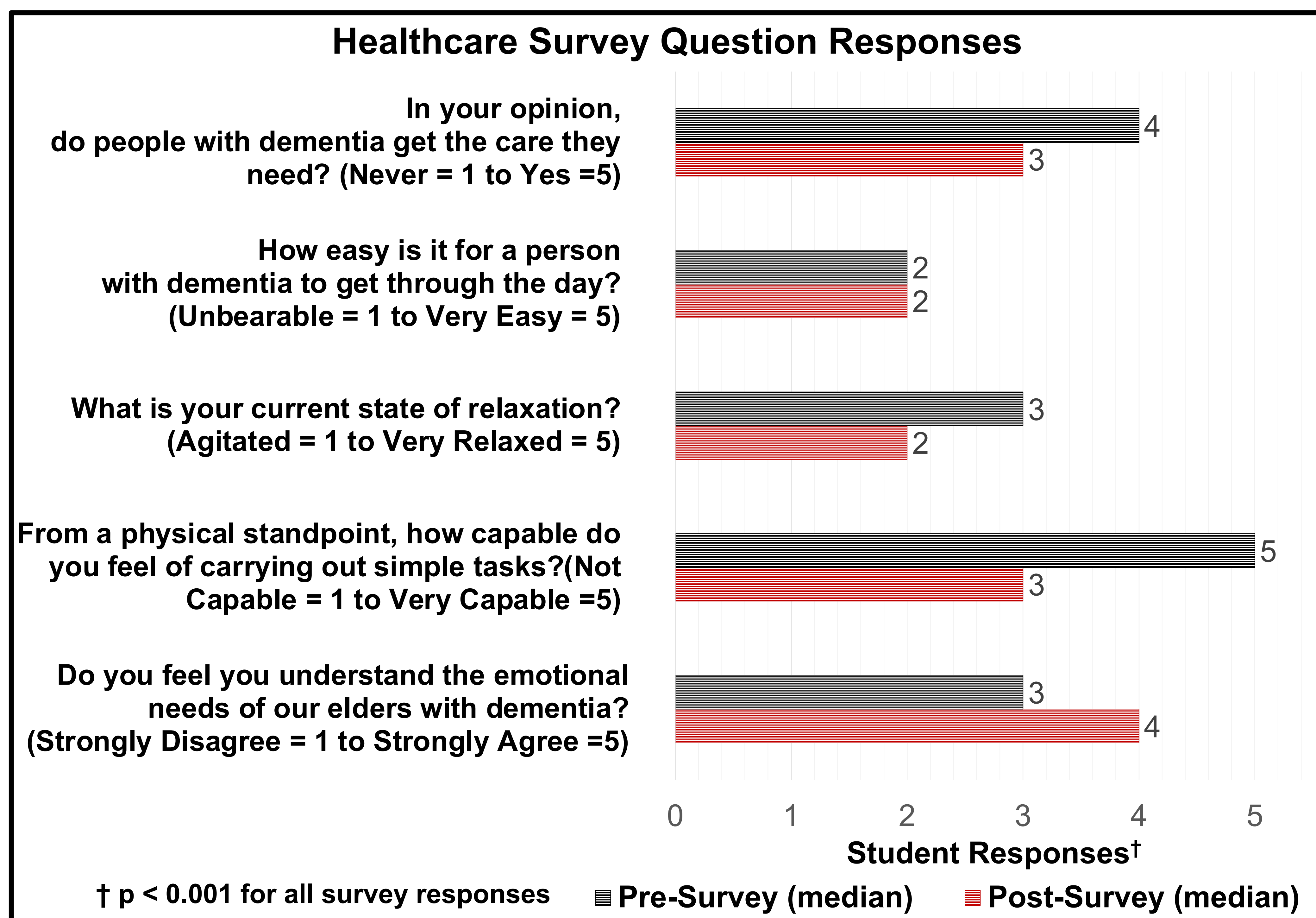
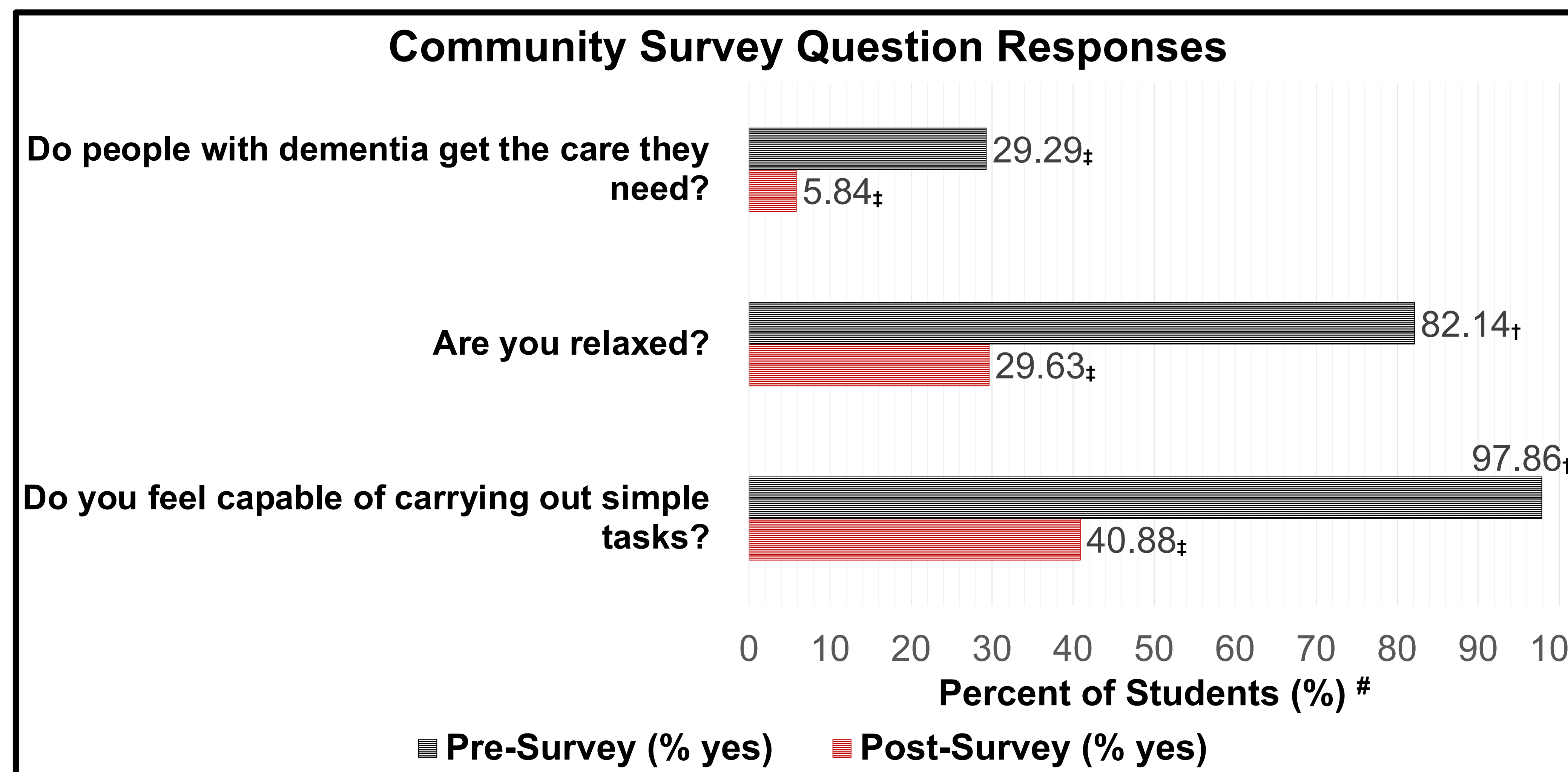


**Figure 1.** Schematic of students' activities before, during, and after the dementia simulation.

### Statistical Methods:

- Related-Samples McNemar Change Test performed on dichotomous survey questions
- Related-Samples Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test performed on Likert-scale survey questions

## Results



## Themes

### Empathy

“ I'm able to understand dementia patients better now and am able to be more empathetic to their experience. Although I'm not sure I've ever met anyone with dementia, knowing what potential patients or their family members may be experiencing is really valuable. ”

### Patient Care and Advocacy

“ [My role as a pharmacist is] To optimize medication regimens for patients with dementia not only with their dementia meds but all other medications. This means making things simpler for them by trying to minimize how many medications a patient is on everyday along with making it easier for the patient to remember and to take the medications. ”

### Education and Awareness

“ I am now more aware of the help that people living with dementia need. I will pay more attention to the needs of people who are diagnosed with dementia, both in my family and in my pharmacy ”

## Conclusion

- Preliminary data indicate significant change in pharmacy students' empathy towards ADRD after participating in VDT
- Implementing VDT into Doctor of Pharmacy curriculum can better prepare for students to care for patients with ADRD
- Further investigation is needed to determine long-term impact of VDT on pharmacy students

## References

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2. Slater P, Hasson F, Gillen P, Gallen A, Parlour R. Virtual simulation training: Imaged experience of dementia. *Int J Older People Nurs.* 2019;14(3):e12243.
3. Wijma EM, Veerbeek MA, Prins M, Pot AM, Willemsse BM. A virtual reality intervention to improve the understanding and empathy for people with dementia in informal caregivers: Results of a pilot study. *Aging Ment Health.* 2018;22(9):1115-1123.
4. Care Interventions for People Living With Dementia and Their Caregivers. [https://effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/cer-231-dementia-interventions-final\\_0.pdf](https://effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/cer-231-dementia-interventions-final_0.pdf). Published 2020. Accessed June 24, 2023.